

THE JUMPING BICYCLE

HE was a genius—at any rate, he himself often said so, with considerable fervor.

One evening he was sitting in a chair, looking tired and hot and very grimy but fairly brimming over with joy.

"Hullo, Jim!" he cried. "It's all right, I've succeeded at last!"

"What's the matter?" he inquired. "You want to know, do you?"

"Yes, you're very curious for a wonder. But there is no reason now why I should not tell you about it."

"I'll show the working of the machine. And you can prepare yourself to be very much astonished."

"He was right in saying that I was astonished," he said. "I was following his instructions. I was in the garden the next afternoon at 5 o'clock, anxious to see the invention that was to revolutionize the world."

"When he came he brought with him a bicycle."

"It was," he cried, "as soon as he saw me. 'What do you think of this?' A beauty, isn't it?"

"I looked. It was not an ordinary bicycle, but one more heavily built, with numerous additional cogs and cranks and an air cylinder like that of an air brake."

"What on earth is this clumsy thing for?" I exclaimed.

"Clumsy be hanged!" he replied, irritably. "My dear fellow, if you will start criticizing anything before you understand it, how can you ever expect to go on?"

"I will not do that," I said. "I will wait until you have explained to me and I will understand it. You remember my remarking some weeks ago how extraordinary it was that as yet no one had had the intelligence to invent a traveling machine which could surmount obstacles in its path, like a jump by jumping over them. Very well, he has done it. I saw the first mechanical invention to do so. This bicycle is not an ordinary wheel, which loses half its usefulness and charm by being compelled to keep to the roads. This is the famous jumping bicycle I have had in my mind so long. Observe this cylinder full of air at a high pressure. As you see by this little gauge, it now stands at 150 pounds. The cylinder is constructed to bear a pressure of 400. These four bars with joints in them are connected with the cylinder by means of the cranks and levers, which will play the part of a horse's legs; the joints are, of course, the knees. Now, how simple the whole thing is. At my right hand I have a tiny lever, with the powers marked 'easy,' 'strong' and 'full.' Oh, by the way, I forgot to remark that, even if you could possibly understand, there is an immense waste of power in the ordinary bicycle. Going down a steep hill, for instance, enough power is generated to run the bicycle on a level road for four to five miles. All this will be wasted energy. The bicycle utilized in compressing the air in the cylinder. When I come to an obstacle—say I want to get across a ditch—I press the lever to 'easy,' and the machine takes a leap in the air of about eighteen inches, while the forward impetus carries it easily to the other side. If I put the lever on 'strong,' it can take a jump of six or seven feet."

"It was a splendid effort; indeed, I never saw such a tremendous jump so gallantly attempted. But, as it happened, the plucky bicycle just landed on the top of the wall and with a horrid crash both machine and rider fell at the feet of a procession of fourteen young ladies who were about to take their daily airing. The bicycle, which had been compressed in the cylinder to deliver several violent kicks at the genius as he lay on the ground."

"He will be carried down from his bedroom into the garden some time tomorrow afternoon, and the doctor says that if his collar-bone sets well he will be fairly sound in about another week."

SIG COMET COMING OUR WAY.

A Splendid Traveler Due to Be Within Human Vision in 1911.

Halley's comet is coming back—the comet which in the year 1906 shed a celestial splendor over the Norman conquest and whose terror-inspiring light was commemorated by the head of Queen Matilda in the Bayeux tapestry, says the Providence Journal; the comet that in 1456, the year of the battle of Belgrade, scared the Turk and Christian alike and was anathematized by a bull from the pope; the comet whose strange, scimitar form still chilled the marrow of the ignorant and superstitious at its latest return in 1835. It is yet far away, but the eye of science sees it already within the orbit of Neptune, rushing toward earthward with constantly increasing velocity as it falls along the steep curve of its orbit. And a call to arms a call for preparation, has just been issued from one of the chief centers of astronomy. Prof. Glassopp announces that the coming year will be established by the Russian Astronomical society has undertaken the calculation of the true path of Halley's comet with a view to predicting the exact date of the next return. He hopes that astronomers acquainted with unpublished observations of the comet will communicate the information to the society. After its perihelion the comet was watched retreating out into space until May, 1936, when it was finally swallowed from sight. It will be in perihelion again about 1911, but with the great telescopes now in existence, and the greater chance that may then have been constructed, it is probable that the comet will be detected coming sunward a year or more earlier than that. The fact that the labor of computing the precise time of its return is already about to begin gives assurance that the next time it will not be a question of how many days, but rather of how many hours or even minutes, the calculations will be in error.

"BEFO' THE WA."

The Sunsets Then Were Far More Beautiful.

Southerners who lived in more luxuriant before the war than they have been able to do since have a very natural way of dating everything by comparing every event of the present time to those palmy days "befo' the wa," says the Country Gentleman. It is quite natural to add that all things were better by the comparison. It was the custom of the guests at the sanitarium to assemble on the porch just before sundown, to watch the retiring process of old Sol as he slipped away to bed behind Mount Pisgah, one of the loveliest peaks of the Blue range. Some of the guests would say they could not see the shafts of sunlight were gliding in domes of the most lofty hills and every one was all but speechless with admiration at the splendor of the sunset. One woman, a northerner and a newcomer, was able to keep her tongue going "Oh, I do think," she was saying to a southern lady, "that it is the most exquisite sunset I ever saw. Tell me, is it a custom down here for the sun to set like that?" "Oh, that's nothing," was the reply; "you should have seen it 'befo' the wa!"

Asparagus for the Car.

The asparagus served at the Elvise banquet cost the respectable sum of 3 francs per piece, or 39 francs the bundle, and any one fond of reckoning the form a guess as to the price of the total cost of this course alone and the amount consumed among 200 guests. Still, the price was not unreasonable, all things considered, as asparagus during the month of October has hitherto been an unrealized dream of cultivators, who so far have only managed with the greatest difficulty to raise a poor apology for the real vegetable in December by means of hot-houses and unceasing care and pains. Every one knows the difference between the latter and fresh spring asparagus; but that placed before the car was freshly cut and in no way inferior to the very best grown in April or May. The expensive dining car, from the far-famed garden of Carpentras, whence all the finest produce of the kind in Paris comes, and the growers of that district are justly proud of their latest success, which has excited much interest in horticultural circles, and will no doubt do lasting good to the growers.—Gentleman.

The Upper Air.

Scientific curiosity knows no bounds. One of its latest manifestations is the attempt of Messieurs Danzon and Hermitte at Paris to ascertain the composition of the air at great heights above the earth. For this purpose they set up balloons containing an instrument invented by Monsieur Hermitte, which consists of a tube exhausted of air and fitted with a valve which automatically opens at a time fixed in advance. As soon as air has rushed into the tube, which is closed at the height at which the tube was filled, it is known by means of a self-recording barometer. No important discovery has yet been achieved with this instrument, but interesting results are expected from it. It is the converse of the instruments which are used to bring up specimens of water from great depths in the sea.

Death Brought \$100,000.

Life insurance to the amount of \$100,000 was recently paid to the widow of Edson Keith, who committed suicide in Chicago some months ago.

The Cherre Fougge gourd, which grows in India, increases its length three times daily for thirty-four days. The cemeteries of the city of London cover over 2,000 acres of ground.

Nothing.

Now, you must keep nothing from me. Client—I haven't. I paid you every cent I had in the world for your retainer.—Tid-Bits.

PROBLEMS ABOUT MARS.

That lovely orange-colored object which gleams with unmatchable splendor high up in the eastern sky, the "Red Planet" is more numerous at one time than at another. And the phenomenon of doubling, first observed about fifteen years ago by the Milanese astronomer, Schiaparelli, is also visible only at certain times, and to very different degrees of abundance.

The Seasons of Mars.

Inasmuch as the axis of Mars is little over like the earth's—only a little less—the ruddy planet has seasons. The gradual disappearance of white patches around the poles, presumably snow, every summer, and the formation of dark belts around these shrinking areas are among the best known of the seasonal changes on Mars; but the other variations referred to have also been found to be related, to a great extent, with the time of year at which the observation was made. It was not an unreasonable surmise, then, that the occasional encroachment of dark areas on the bright ones might represent an inundation of low-lying and almost perfectly level lands. In consequence of a slight rise of the sea, if, as is credible, the Martian oceans are very shallow, one can understand why their color fades out near the edges, and how the access of a little water from the polar regions might produce the effect observed. So, too, with the canals. If they are veritable water courses, and if the little dark spots at their intersections be "lakes" (as they have sometimes been called), their visibility and the duplication of both canals and lakes might well be dependent on the time and plentifulness of the water supply.

Schiaparelli's Map of Mars.

The earth does not approach Mars as closely at this opposition as it does sometimes. His orbit is much more elliptical than the earth's, and the two are farther apart in some places than in others. In early August, 1892, they came within 35,000,000 miles of each other, and Mars then spanned an angle of near twenty-seven seconds; in October he was 40,000,000 miles away at

REFLECTIONS IN A CHAPEL.

Large Brass Cross Which Serves as a Mirror.

Recently the governor of one of our county prisons was greatly perplexed by the discovery that the female criminals in his charge managed in some mysterious manner to ascertain the presence of every individual man on the other side of the impervious dividing barrier which separates the male from the female warders in the jail chapel. He says the London Hospital, one of the women inadvertently made an exclamation, showing that she had suddenly become aware that her husband was within the same walls, although his presence ought, according to the rules, to have been completely unknown to her. None of the officers could account for an unpermitted knowledge which was found to be shared by all the other women. At last, very careful examination of the chapel gave an explanation of the mystery. Although strictly divided, as we have said, both the male and the female prisoners faced the altar in their seats and over it had been fixed a very large brass cross against the wall, so highly polished as to form a very good mirror, and in its clear surface the women saw the reflection of every man as he passed to his place and had enjoyed the spectacle with impunity till the wife's affection overcame her discretion. The cross was instantaneously disappeared.

A Boy with a Quick Wit.

George Pomeroy was a very mischievous boy in school, but quick to think of some means to escape punishment when caught in a scrape.

When in the sixth grade his cousin from New York state was visiting him, and one day they went to school together. They sat in a double seat, behind the high stove and were having a good time, but becoming rather noisy the attention of the teacher was attracted and she stole down unnoticed by either until she was just in front of them. Before she could reprimand them, however, George arose perfectly composed and said:

"Pardon me, teacher—Miss Payne, this is my cousin, Frank White, from Buffalo, who with his parents is visiting us. Mother would be pleased to have you call."

The introduction and invitation were so natural and cordially given the teacher could not repress a smile, and it is needless to say, no punishment was given.

Stamps are causing a good deal of trouble in certain localities in western Kansas. They open newly made graves and exchange clothing with the corpses. The dead bodies, after being buried in the old clothes, are placed back in their graves to await Gabriel's signal.—Exchange.

Killed While Felling a Tree.

On Files creek, W. Va., while G. W. Daniels and Vincent Louk were cutting a tree, a splinter rebounded as the trunk broke from the stump, striking Louk, and killing him instantly. He was 20, and had been married six months.—Exchange.

WORTHY WORDS.

The stander of some people is as great a recommendation as the praises of others.—Felding.

Let us bind love with duty, for duty is the love of law, and law is the nature of the eternal.—George Eliot.

Things divine are not attainable by mortals who understand sensual things, but only the light-armed arrive at the summit.—Zoroaster.

Every man feels instinctively that all the beautiful sentiments in the world weigh less than a single lovely action.—James Russell Lowell.

Liberty is the right and the duty of the human soul; he who pretends to enslave the conscience must desire to enchain the body.—Mazzini.

That there should one man die ignorant who had capacity for knowledge, this I call tragedy, were it to happen more than twenty times in the minute.—Carlyle.

To pardon those absurdities in ourselves, which we cannot suffer in others, is neither better nor worse than to be more willing to be fools ourselves, than to have others so.—Pope.

No quality will ever get a man more friends than a sincere admiration of the qualities of others. It indicates generosity of nature, frankness, cordiality and cheerful recognition of merit.—Dr. Johnson.

Virtue is not a mushroom, that springs up of itself in one night when we are asleep, or regard it not; but a delicate plant, that grows slowly and tenderly, needing much pains to cultivate it, much care to guard it, much time to mature it, in our outward soil, in this world's unkindly weather.—Barrow.

SOME HOROSCOPES.

FEATURES OF LIFE INDICATED BY THE PLANETS.

Some Instructions to Applicants for Free Readings—Full Name and Address Must Accompany Every Letter—Private Readings.

HE Astrologer insists that every applicant for a free reading in these columns must give full name and address. The answer will be by initial unless some other means of identification is adopted by applicant.

You do not know the exact date or hour of birth, send TWO two-cent stamps for special instructions. Every request for a horoscope will be answered in its turn. Several hundreds have already been filed. Personal wishing private readings by two-cent stamps. Address all letters to Prof. G. W. Cunningham, Dept. 4, 194 South Clinton street, Chicago, Ill. This week's horoscopes are as follows:

X. Y. Z., Crete, Neb.—You are a mixture of the signs Aries, which Mars rules, and Taurus, which Venus rules, and therefore Mars and Venus are your ruling planets. You are medium height or above; medium to light complexion; the eyes have a peculiar sparkle and sharp sight and are of a medium to light color. You are very active and energetic and quite ambitious to push business; yet, if this time is correct, you have no constitution that will allow you to carry out your ambitions, and your worst ally to intentions of a dimpled in some of your head. You have a great love for the beautiful in art and nature; you are possessed with a great ability to talk, write and work fine embroidery and paint; you have natural ability in some of the fine arts. However, only those that know you well, and fully appreciate you, and the last half of life will be uphill work, the last half will be some better. Marriage is unfortunate for you.

"Flax," Smithboro, Ill.—Data proclaim you a mixture of the signs Libra, which Venus rules, and therefore Venus and Mars are your ruling planets. You are medium height; well-set figure; medium complexion; hazel eyes; hair was flaxen when young, but has been getting some darker as you have grown older. If you had been born a few minutes earlier, your life would be a double-edged sword. You are endowed with the indications of both the gentle, confiding, modest Venus; also the bold, aggressive, reformer, warlike Mars, and you will act in accordance with whichever one of these happens to be called forth.

You are fond of anything that relates to chemistry and mystery; also the beautiful in art, such as music, painting, drawing, sketching, etc. You need some special instructions or you will get rid of all the money you can make and have nothing left to show for it. Marriage fortunate.

"Mrs. Helena," Calico.—According to data, the sign Sagittarius, which Jupiter rules, was rising at your birth, and, therefore, Jupiter is your ruling planet or significator. You are medium height or above, with a well-set figure. The complexion very clear and healthy; the hair medium to light; eyes light; you are fond of being a cheerful, happy disposition; you do not allow anything like the blues to come near you; you are also noted for being fully appreciated by all, and you can secure and hold a good position at any time you wish; you have had a very eventful life and have been a great traveler; and the last half of life has been the most fortunate; you can always command a good salary if you wish, and will make and handle large sums of money during your life, yet will meet with many losses. You are a great lover of horses. You have great ambition for a large business. You have a remarkably strong constitution.

Helen, Dubuque, Iowa.—You have the zodiacal sign Libra rising, and therefore Venus is your ruling planet. You are medium height or above; slender figure; medium to light complexion, hair and eyes. If born four minutes earlier you have Uranus also for ruling planet, and that would denote a little darker shade to the eyes. You are cheerful and happy most of the time, yet will be subject to short spells of the blues, and if anyone does you an injury you are not apt to forget it very soon; yet you will forgive them and be very just to them if you had any dealings with them, for you are a lover of justice, and have also a great admiration for the fine arts. You will have very strong intuitions at times, yet this will only be spasmodic in its actions. Marriage will be more than average fortunate for you.

FACTS ABOUT GAMES.

On the old-time cards used in India the vizier is represented as mounted on a horse, a camel or a tiger.

It is said by some writers that the game of dominoes was known to the Jews in the time of Solomon.

Dice of ivory and marble have been found in the ruins of Roman houses in various parts of Great Britain.

Dice almost exactly similar to those now used have been discovered in Thebes and other Egyptian cities.

Both Aeschylus and Sophocles, in their tragedies, allude to the game of dice as being common in their day.

The Arabic cards are believed to have been originally associated with necromantic or fortune-telling practices.

According to one historian, cards were brought from the East and first used by Europeans in Italy in 1379.

French historians say that the introduction of dice into France was in the reign of Philip Augustus, 1189 to 1223.

The name of chess is supposed by some philologists to have been derived from Shah, the Persian name for king.

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